

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

TENANT POWER!

Go ahead
won for
Lea View
renewal

12p! Sorry! We've had to put the price up from this issue. See back page.

65 stay inside

The occupation of Hollywell House (Shoreditch offices of MacDonald Phoebus, a subsidiary of the British Printing Corporation), is now entering its third month. The 65 members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) who occupied in opposition to redundancies (see last month's *Hackney People's Press*) have managed to maintain their morale, even in the face of threats and intimidation from the management.

The 65, who were all sacked when they took over the offices, will not come out of occupation until they are all reinstated, the redundancies are reversed and full back pay is granted.

The management threatened the staff that if the occupation did not finish by 5 Jan they would "never speak to the occupiers again". (Shame.) But the deadline came and went and the management are still talking.

BPC management attempted to split the occupation, by offering to swap two people threatened with redundancy for two pregnant women involved in the occupation. Not surprisingly this was decisively rejected by the occupation, which reaffirmed its total opposition to all redundancies.

When this tactic failed an attempt was made to split the NUJ from the occupation by making direct approaches to the General Secretary, Ken Ashton. But the NUJ are continuing to pay £20 a week strike pay and at the time of going to press are standing firm by this.

Donations and support are still urgently needed and should be sent c/o:

NUJ Book Branch,
314 Grays Inn Rd,
LONDON WC1.

Cheques should be made out to: MacDonald Educational NUJ Chapel.

Lea View tenants have won their fight to get the estate improved. Hackney councillors passed the £5 million renovation programme at a joint Housing Management and Housing Development Committee meeting on 19th January. All that remains is for the Labour Group and the Department of the Environment to approve the scheme and work on the estate will start in August.

150 tenants from Lea View marched on Hackney Town Hall on 19th January when the final decision was to be made. The march was the culmination of an intense "Renew Lea View" campaign run by the Lea View Tenants Association. The marchers were set to occupy the meeting but councillors passed a motion to allow press and public to stay.

The vote was finally taken at 11.30, after some pretty heated discussion and despite a move by Chairperson Charlie Cable to block it. Eleven of the fourteen councillors who stuck it out to the end voted in favour. Also passed was a £3 million improvement project for Stonebridge Estate in Haggerston. A similar programme for Holly Street Estate was not passed.

According to a spokesperson from the Lea View T.A.: "It was muscle that made them change their mind. I have never seen a council meeting where they were so frightened and disrupted so much. It was raw tenant power". Jack Davidson, chairperson of the T.A., said: "The tenants were not going to sit back and be fobbed off by Hackney council any longer".



This is the third time that Lea View has been considered for improvement. Jack described the residents as "a very angry bunch of tenants".

DE IIED

Lea View was not expecting to win this time either. Hackney's housing policy has tended towards spending on newly acquired houses, home improvement grants and Housing Associations. The Housing Improvement programme has been cut from £39 million to £21 million. Allegations in the *Hackney Gazette* that Lea View won at the expense of a special housing programme for pensioners have been vehemently denied by the Tenants

Association. "No programmes have been cut because of us. And anyway the estate will have sheltered units for pensioners".

Plans for the renovation scheme have already been prepared by Camden architects Hunt Thompson Associates. The architects interviewed almost half the households on the estate, spending an hour with each to find out what the tenants wanted. Weekly Strategy Group meetings were also held with the tenants, to keep them informed on developments in the plan. This is the first time that a renovation programme for a pre-war estate has been drawn up in full consultation with the residents.

Renovation work will be

carried out with the majority of the tenants still living on the estate. Bigger flats, special "mobility" and sheltered housing units, gardens and a central play area are included in the scheme. As Jack Davidson put it: "You include every kind of person in the community in this development. It will be a totally self-sufficient community".

Increasing the size of the present 300 units will mean losing 52 flats, but a corresponding number of tenants want to move anyway. Apart from this, tenants' commitment to the estate has totally changed since the Tenants Association was formed: people wanting to move are now definitely in the minority.

MORLEY CUT-OFF

Following two dramatic dawn raids by police the Morley House squat in Cazenove Road has had all its electricity and gas supplies cut off.

At least 25 people were arrested, mainly on charges relating to the stealing of gas and electricity, but the police indiscriminately smashed through the doors of all the tenants on two of the blocks on the estate.

The first raid took place

on 14 January and was made by a large number of police, accompanied by police dogs and gas board officials.

The police carried no warrants and yet made extensive searches for drugs and stolen goods. Many doors were broken down in the raid, while others had 6-inch nails driven into their hinges to prevent tenants from re-entering their flats.

Whilst searching the rooms the police took many photo-



graphs, presumably to be used later in evidence.

Using the excuse that many of the tenants were not paying for gas, the supplies to the estate were cut off, although electric cooking rings

were brought in by the Gas Board for those who complained that they were in fact paying their gas bills.

But in the early hours of the following morning, the police arrived again, this time with Electricity Board officials, and electricity supplies were cut off under the pretext that all the wiring on the estate was in a dangerous condition.

As a result of these raids about half of the 150 people who lived in the squat have been intimidated into leaving.

Speaking to residents of Morley House HPP has dis-

covered that these raids follow several months of police harassment. It is estimated that some 50% of the residents had been picked up by the police prior to the raids.

Morley House has been a licensed squat for over one year. In that time Gas and Electricity officials have visited the estate several times, but have not ordered any repairs.

The raid has echoes of the type of police activity which accompanied the eviction of squatters from Kilner House near the Oval.

LONDON GETS HESELTINED

Michael Heseltine's announcement just before Christmas of the new methods of calculating grants from central government to local authorities kept finance officers up and down the country busy on their pocket calculators all over the holiday period. Urban areas, particularly London, guessed - and until they had looked at the formulae in detail it was only a guess - that Heseltine was penalising them in favour of the richer, often Tory controlled, shire counties. Now it seems as though this is true.

Research done at North East London Polytechnic by Tony Travers shows how the shire counties have won at the expense of the cities. We present some of his work here in the hope that it will illuminate the Council's own decision-making process, as it sets about fixing the rates for next year. In fact, it is not clear yet whether these figures have been presented to Council leaders, so maybe they will learn something, too.

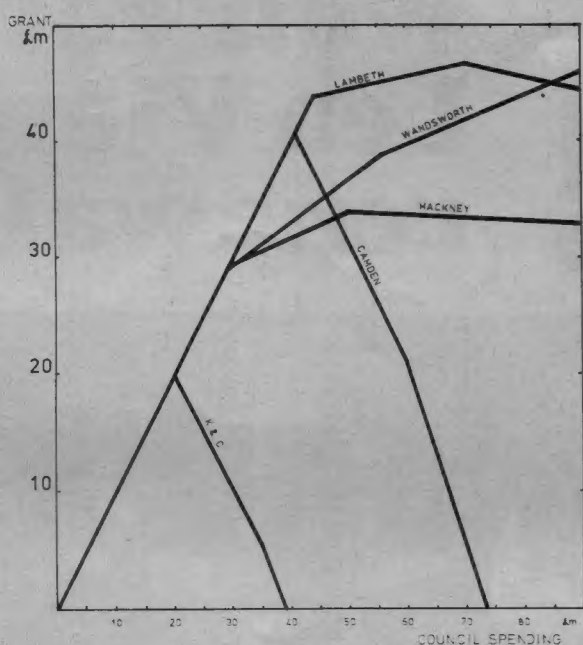
The graph in this article shows how the new block grant system relates to council spending. In the past, a council was given a rate support grant, which was a direct percentage of its total spending for the year, with various special factors taken into account. Under the new Tory system, each local authority gets a certain amount of money, calculated according to a complicated formula and based on a level of spending which the Department of the Environment decides should be spent in the area.

The calculations have been done for five boroughs in London. Three of them are Labour controlled: Hackney, Lambeth and Camden. Wandsworth and Kensington & Chelsea are run by the Tories. Each line shows how the grant given by the government would vary with the level of Council spending.

At low levels of spending each Council would receive all the money back from the



HOW TOWN HALLS WILL SUFFER



government as block grant. The differences between the boroughs become apparent at the first kink in each borough's line. In two cases, Kensington & Chelsea and Camden, the grant starts to fall very quickly. This means that as soon as Kensington & Chelsea's expenditure reaches £39 million and Camden's reaches £74 million, they will receive absolutely no government money.

In the other three cases, the grant just drops quickly, but does not drop towards zero, until the second kink.

At the second kink, the rate changes again. This point is the "grant related expenditure level plus threshold". This bit of jargon, in plain English, is the level of spending that the government thinks is correct for the particular area - with a bit added on to allow for error. This bit averages about 10 per cent

across the country, but less in London.

This point is where the grant should start to go down. Indeed it does for both Hackney and Lambeth - both Labour controlled boroughs which have angered Heseltine in the past for refusing to give into his bullying tactics.

As we have seen, in both Kensington & Chelsea and Camden the grant started going down long before the second kink was reached. But in Wandsworth, run by a right-wing Tory council, and in a lot of the rest of the country, the grant continues to rise. This is exactly the opposite of what is supposed to happen, and suggests a major error by the Department of the Environment.

Hackney itself suffers very badly. Although the grant does not go down very much as spending rises, the maximum it can get seems to be £34.4 million. Last year the level announced under the old rate support grant settlement was £46.4 million. So Hackney has lost £12 million before taking account of one year's inflation and assuming staff wage rises of 6 per cent and general price rises of 11 per cent. Even if the last year had seen zero inflation and even if these percentages applied, Hackney would have to set a rate increase of 28.3 per cent to make up for lost grant. As it is, the actual rate of inflation and the wage settlements (which look like being a very low 7.5 per cent) will in fact make it very hard to keep rate increases below 40 per cent to stay in the same position. Running fast to stand still, in fact.

LETTERS

MONEY NEEDED

Dear HPP,

Readers of *Hackney People's Press* may have noticed several articles in recent months on Matthew O'Hara who died last June. The case has also received one report in the national press (*The Observer*).

The Matthew O'Hara Committee is now in urgent need of funds so that we can continue our campaign to secure a public inquiry into the treatment of Matthew O'Hara in Pentonville Prison in March 1980. The campaign also co-operates with other groups against Home Office secrecy and for reform of the Prison Medical Service. Funds are needed to continue to pay for such items as the paper for printing leaflets, for duplicating documents and for postage.

Small donations from many people would be particularly welcome to give us encouragement and to ensure a wide base of support for our campaign.

Please send donations to:
Matthew O'Hara Committee
(Treasurer Joan Hughes),
177 Glenarm Road,
Clapton,
LONDON E5 0NB.

Joan Hughes.

THATCHER BLITZ

Dear HPP,

In the last three months many parents and grandparents will have been telling those under forty what the wartime blitz was like, when Coventry, London, Plymouth, Glasgow and Liverpool were bombed to demoralise the people and destroy industrial production. Forty years on, we are living through another blitzkrieg, this time directed by the Thatcher Government.

The closure of factories, schools, hospitals, the accelerating rate of unemployment with its monstrous waste of skill and productive capacity, the flight of capital from British industry to havens overseas - all promise a barren future if we let Thatcher continue her misrule. Her main boast is to have reduced inflation to only twice what it was when she took office!

No wonder she's frightened to call referenda on any of her policies! She covers up her failings by insulting British workers, blaming us for low productivity, when it is finance capital's refusal to invest in British industry which makes us less competitive. The Japanese invest ten times more per engineering employee than do the British investors.

This greedy and irresponsible policy is ruining our country. We must prevent 1981 being an even worse year for Britain than 1980 was, and put Thatcher out.

Will Podmore.

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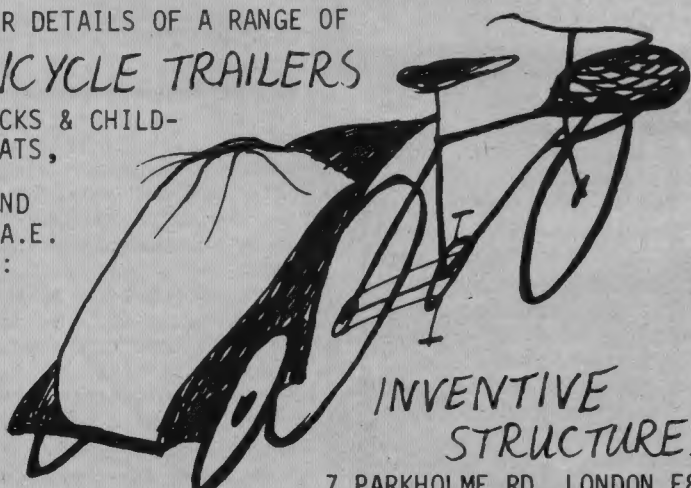
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MONETARIST MISRULE

As another year of monetarist misrule grinds painfully on, the Tory promises of a booming economy, a surge of investment and industrial growth have failed to materialise. Instead of the '80s heralding a 'better life for all', for the many who have been thrown out of work they have become a decade of despair.

Unemployment is rising, and faster than even the Government imagined. Already over 2½ million are on the dole, and even conservative predictions say that the figure will reach 3 million well before the year is out. That means one person in 8 of the working population will be jobless.

Real Toll

But the real toll is much higher. The 'official' unemployment statistics only take account of those who are able to sign on - they don't include people, mostly married women, who cannot register for unemployment benefit. In Hackney, where factories like Lesney's and the clothing trade have laid off hundreds of women workers, a significantly large section of the labour force has simply disappeared off the records.

What private industry there is in Hackney is rapidly declining. And on top of this the Government's restrictions on public spending is forcing local authorities to cut back on services and, in the

end, jobs. When the Rate Support Grant is announced in spring hundreds of council and voluntary sector jobs could go at a stroke.

A massive campaign of action is needed to halt the massive increase of redundancies, which is growing daily. Throughout this series on unemployment, HPP will be looking at what measures can be taken, and the groups who are standing up to resist the devastating effects of the Tory Government's policies.

FIGHTING THE TORY ROT

Over the past year unemployment in Hackney has nearly doubled, from 4,289 in December 1979, to over 7,400 last Christmas. At the same time the number of vacancies in the local Job Centres has dropped by two thirds, with the result that more and more people are looking for even fewer jobs. In the first of a series of articles on unemployment, HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS finds out what the local Trades Council is doing to fight the Tory rot. Hackney, which has one of the highest unemployment rates in London, will soon have a much needed unemployed centre. The Trades Council has been pushing for such a centre for many months now, and has managed to get Hackney Council to provide premises rent and rate free. Whether this is a

result of plagued consciences in the Council over the redundancies they have made, or a reflection of the fact that Hackney Council has one of the largest number of empty properties in the whole country, is not clear. Plans so far are to have the Centre in prominent shop-front premises.

The Manpower Services Commission is willing to fund three workers, but the Trades Council is determined that these people should be from Hackney and answerable to the Trades Council, not the MSC.

The Centre, which should be opened some time in the early summer, will give advice and information to unemployed workers. But its main function will be to organise the unemployed. Even with 2½ million on the dole the TUC and union leaders continue to take no action over this issue. However, with local initiatives of this sort and mounting concern among union leaders about falling memberships (although undoubtedly prompted by financial considerations), there is a possibility that some action will be taken.

The priorities for the Centre will be to campaign over local issues such as free bus passes and weekly signings for the registered

unemployed. But more importantly the Centre will be able to engage in joint action with employed workers over redundancies and closures.

For more information about the Unemployed Centre, contact the Trades Council, 96 Dalston Lane, E8.



Support Unit

The Trades Council, with money from Urban Aid, have also set up a Support Unit to give advice and information to unions in the borough. In addition, the two workers will be doing research into the local economy and will be liaising closely with the Unemployed Centre.

The Support Unit is situated at 34 Dalston Lane (telephone 249 8086), and will act as a focus for the Trades Council activities. Trade unionists are welcome to drop in, send in information and seek advice.

NATION ON THE DOLE



PROBLEMS IN PARTNERSHIP

Hackney was declared a Partnership Authority, with Islington, back in 1977. The intention was that central government, the local authority, local people and their groups would work together "in partnership". They would use central government funds (75 per cent) plus local authority grants (25 per cent) to work on all the problems Hackney was experiencing as an inner city area. These include job losses, housing decay, lack of social services, education and health facilities and the general environment.

The programme is in its third year. Each year for the past two years Hackney has had around £4½ million to spend (compared with a total spending turnover of £144 million for Hackney Borough Council).

Recently, as part of the government's "restriction on public expenditure", Hackney was singled out as an "overspending" authority, resulting in three sorts of financial penalties:

1. Hackney's share of the national £200 million cut in local spending;
2. A specific penalty for Hackney, amongst other, mostly Labour-controlled, authorities who "overspent" of £1 million;

3. The withdrawal of Hackney Council as a partner in the Partnership.

As a response to particularly the latter penalty, but closely related to all the financial penalties, Hackney Community Action (nee PIP and Hackney Community Link-up) decided to mount a campaign to save Partnership, particularly though not exclusively linked to community groups in Hackney (there are now well over 130 community and ethnic minority groups who are or have been funded by Partnership, including previous Urban Aid and there are over 80 workers employed by these groups).

Tactics

Various tactics have been discussed in trying to save Partnership. Some have been put into practice: a petition is circulating Hackney groups, individuals, councillors, council officers unions; a proposed demonstration at County Hall for 19 January was called off by the government with two days to go; press statements and other general propaganda about the threat to Partnership.

Various meetings between Hackney councillors and Lord Bellwin, the Secretary to the Inner City Directorate (ex-Tory leader of Leeds Council) have been taking

place in the run-up to the 19 January main Partnership meeting at County Hall. These have been mainly to discuss whether Hackney could, or should, apply for a waiver on these penalties to get them withdrawn. (Islington Council did negotiate with the government and got their penalties waived, much to the disgust of many Labour authorities.)

Hackney Council has refused to discuss this issue with the government representatives on the basis that this would amount to agreeing with the cuts, the "management" of spending and the principle of restricting and reducing public expenditure. On their part, Hackney Council have remained in solidarity with the group of nine Labour London authorities who are pursuing court action around the penalties, on the basis that:

a. The yardsticks used for measuring overspending were not consistently applied; some authorities could have been penalised and were not (eg Conservative-controlled urban areas), others were penalised and should not have been. Therefore the penalties were illegal.

b. The interim penal clauses used by the Environment Minister Michael Heseltine were put into force ahead of the local government legislation. This

action should be coming to court soon.

The position about Partnership at the moment is that next year Hackney Council will not be able to submit a full list of its own proposals (though £497,000 worth of Council projects are in the draft 1981/2 programme about to be finalised) at the same time community organisations have put in requests for £459,000 worth of projects. The major problem is that if government included next year's central and local government spending on partnership in an assessment of Hackney's level of public expenditure (as it has done this year), then Hackney Council will be penalised for trying to solve its problems - penalised for receiving government money!

Secondly, all the other cutbacks and penalties will leave the council unable to carry out its mainline spending plans, then putting massive pressure on Council spending committees being able to find their 25 per cent of those projects which

Cancellation

The 19 January main Partnership meeting with central government ministers was cancelled, with less than one working day to go. The apparent reason was that Lord Bellwin - the same

government negotiator that councillors had met before - had replaced the previous chairperson (Sir Geoffrey Finsberg MP) and that Lord Bellwin had a previous engagement! As a result Hackney Community Action had to call off the planned demonstration and in its place 25 member groups met Councillors Kotz, Weller, Wilson and Marsh to discuss the current situation.

Councillor Kotz raised many doubts about next year's programme - primarily on the basis that if Hackney was only playing a minor role next year could it, as an authority, "fork out monies, hold the purse strings" for everyone else? Cllr Kotz said that Hackney would be unique (with Lambeth) in getting, of all urban authorities nationally, no Urban Aid. In this case it would put them in a different position regarding funding other organisations. However, next year Hackney Council will have, as things stand at the moment, £2½ million of existing projects and £½ million of new ones. Therefore it is not true they would have no money from Urban Aid.

You are urged to sign the petition and lobby your local councillor to back the Save Partnership campaign.

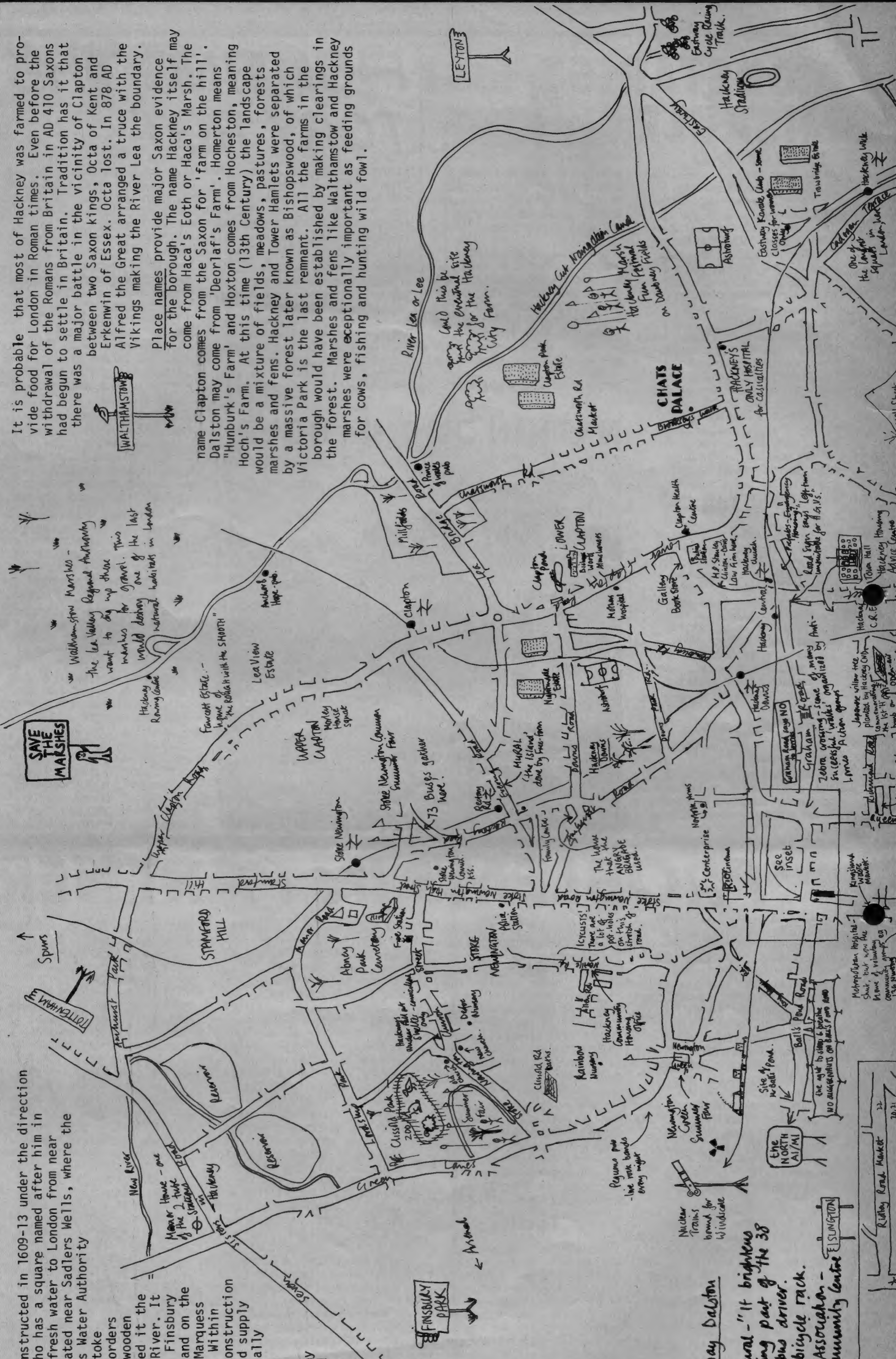
For further details, contact Hackney Community Action, 380 Old St, EC1; tel 729 3356

Map of Hackney

Key to the Present Day Dalton
Jurisdiction Area

1. Ball's Pond Road mural - "It brightens up the most boring part of the 38 Bus Route" - 38 bus driver.
2. Hackney's only bicycle rack.
3. Hackney Cypriot Association - information & community centre
4. Site of King's Island Hospital (see text)
5. Brass Tacks work-

Walthamston Marshes -
the Lea Valley Regional Authority
want to dig up these
marshes for gravel. This
would destroy one of the last
habitats in London.



- [illegible]

The only industry apart from agriculture in the 14-15 century was brick and tile making. Kingsland Road was a major centre.

The manor house of Shacklewell lay on the south side of Shacklewell green.

Bishops Wood Almshouses on the east side of Clapton Pond were originally built in 1690. They have the smallest chapel in England, seating only 10 people in two pews.

Prehistory: one of the most important early Palaeolithic (200,000 BC) lies around Stoke Newington Common. Some of what was found can be seen in the Rose Lipman library.

debating ground. It played an important role as a forum and assembly point for many women's organisations including the suffrage campaigns led by the Pankhursts. It was also the scene of massive anti-fascist rallies in the Thirties. Ridley Road was used by the fascists (under Oswald Mosley) to hold rallies. It was also the scene of many clashes between fascists, anti-fascists and the police.

Hackney Church: In Medieval times, there were only three churches in Hackney - Hackney, Stoke Newington and Shoreditch. Only the tower still remains of Hackney church. The Hackney Brook used to run along the northern part of Mare Street. In the late 18 and 19th centuries this got boarded over and eventually lost underground.

owned a pub, where the tollgate was, outside of which was a pond, used for watering horses.

Hackney Town Hall: the second town hall was completed in 1866. It was built on the former Hackney Grove, an open space at one time used as a paddock for sheep by local butchers. It cost £18,000. It was demolished after the present town hall, built behind it, was opened in 1937.

Grand Union Canal: now only partially navigable, was built in the 19th century to connect the Thames with the industrial Midlands.

Victoria Park: was used by the public from 1845 and its facilities included boating, bathing, cricket and tennis. Women were not allowed to bathe until the beginning of this century. The park was used as a public meeting place and

Kingsland Road and Chapel: the hospital, at the corner of Kingsland Road and Ball's Pond Road, was a leper hospital administered by Barts, until 1761, when the site was leased for building. The chapel belonged to the hospital; after 1761 it was used for worship by the inhabitants of the hamlet of Kingsland. The hospital was one of only two in the borough. The pub Brewery Tap was built on the site of the chapel with the north door corresponding in position to the north door of the chapel

Ball's Pond Road: there used to be a tollgate at the junction of Ball's Pond Road and Essex Road. A toll was levied to raise money for the upkeep of the road. Tolls were introduced in the early 18th century, and they were all gone by the end of the 19th century. Mr Ball was said to have

WHATS ON February

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THEATRE

THEATRE ROYAL, STRATFORD EAST
Gerry Raffles Sq, E15.
(Box Office: 534 0310)

Mon 26 Jan - Sat 7 Feb: The Theatre Royal presents their 'Beano 81', an excitingly varied fortnight's festival of events. Programme as follows:

*26-27 Jan: Brampton Manor School present 'The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew', by Robert Bolt.

*28-31 Jan: Pip Simmons Theatre Group present 'Rien Ne Va Plus', written and directed by Pip Simmons, and featuring The Nice Tennis Club Jazz Band.

*2 Feb: Theatre Du Mouvement, an original form of movement theatre involving mime, dance and gymnastics.

*3-4 Feb: The English Dance Theatre present 'Nosferatu' & 'Love Songs', to be performed on 3 and 4 Feb respectively.

*5-7 Feb: Paines Plough present 'Beef' by David Pownall, a new comedy which draws its inspiration from a 12th Century epic poem.

For times of performances and further details, contact Gill Ward on: 534 7374 or 534 2178.

CHATS PALACE 42-44 Brooksby's Wk, E9 (986 6714)

Sat 31 Jan: 'Clone Yer Own', presented by Covent Garden Community Theatre. Cub reporter Linda Necklace trails missing scientist and encounters strange goings-on and unexplained mysteries at the headquarters of an obscure religious cult.

Perfs: 8.00 pm.
Tickets: £1.20 adults;
60p children & OAP's.

KING'S HEAD THEATRE

115 Upper St, N1 (226 8561)
26 Jan - 14 Feb: The Barrow Poets present 'Daffodils'.
Perf: Dinner at 7.00 pm;
Show at 8.00 pm.
Tickets: £2.00 for show,
£5.95 including
dinner; membership 25 p.

LITTLE ANGEL MARIONETTE THEATRE
14 Dagmar Pass, Cross St, N1
(226 1787)

Shows for 6 years and over
Sats & Suns, 7 Feb - 23 Mar:
'Cupid & Psyche'
Perfs: 3.00 pm. Extra performance: half-term holiday shows on 24, 25 & 26 Feb, at 3.00 pm.

Sat 31 Jan & Sun 1 Feb:
'Wonder Island'
Perfs: 3.00 pm.

Matinees for 3-5 year olds
Sats commencing 31 Jan:
'The Magic Pen'

Perfs: 11.00 am. Special performance on 24, 25 & 26 Feb, at 11.00 am.

Tickets: Afternoon Shows
£1.75 adults;
£1.25 children
Matinees (11 am)
£1.25 adults;
£1.00 children

For all shows it is advisable to book by 'phone

If you want a free listing in our What's On section, send details of your event to HPP, 85 Dalston Lane, E8. Listings for the March issue should be sent by Monday 16th February.

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EAST LONDON TROOPS OUT

are holding a:
BENEFIT

On - **SATURDAY 7 FEBRUARY**

At - **THE LABOUR & TRADES CLUB, 96 DALSTON LANE, E8**

Live music, with New Era and others. Beer.

Starts: 8 pm
Admission: £1 (50p unwaged)

MUSIC

CROWN & CASTLE

Dalston Junction, E8
(254 3678)

The Meeting Place folk club has Irish folk music every Fri, Sat & Sun evenings. Resident band Cara. Plus surprise guests.

8.30 - 11.00 pm. Free



HACKNEY MUSICIANS' COLLECTIVE

List of forthcoming gigs:
Every Monday, at the Earl of Aberdeen pub (corner of Grove Rd & Roman Rd, Bethnal Green E2), 8 pm till midnight; entrance 50p.

*Feb 2: Managing Directors
*Feb 9: Ivory Coasters & The Flats

*Feb 16: To be confirmed
*Feb 23: To be confirmed

Gigs at Chats Palace, 42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9. (Check with Chats Palace for ticket prices.)

*Feb 27: Oxy & The Morons

The Collective have just released an album which has most of the bands in the collective on and this will be on sale at all collective gigs. The collective can be contacted at: 86 Holmleigh Rd, N16, or through Venita at Chats Palace, on 986 6714.



THE PEGASUS 109 Green Lanes, N16 (226 5930)

Music every night of the week, including resident jazz/rock bands. Big Chief plays every Sat. night, Alternative Cabaret every other Sunday night. Check with the Pegasus for music on other nights. Admission (unless otherwise stated): £1.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS BENEFIT

Friday 20 February: HPP is organising yet another world-shattering benefit, with up-and-coming bands The C-Sharps and The Flats.

Chats Palace, 42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9. Starts: 8.00 pm. Admission: £1.20. Disco & bar.

HACKNEY AGAINST CUTS IN EDUCATION (HACE)

Friday 6 February: Benefit. With: The Managing Directors, The C-Sharps and disco. At Chats Palace, 42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9. 8.00 pm. Admission: £1.

CINEMA

KONAK CINEMA 11 Stoke Newington Rd (254 2415)

February Programme

* Commencing Sun 1 Feb:

'The Bermuda Triangle'

* Commencing Sun 8 Feb:

'The Jazz Singer'

* Commencing Sun 15 Feb:

'The Formula'

* Commencing Sun 22 Feb:

'Battle Beyond the Star'

* Commencing Sun 1 Mar:

'The Danger Man'

Tickets: £1.70 adults,

£1.00 children.

For times of programmes,

phone the box office.

RIO CINEMA 107 Kingsland High St, E8. (254 6677)

For details of this month's programme, see the Rio ad.

MEETINGS

HACKNEY FIGHTBACK

Meets on the first Monday of every month. The meetings are open to affiliated groups, to discuss strategy for fighting cuts in local services. 8.00 pm at the Labour & Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E8.

HACKNEY HEALTH CAMPAIGN

Meets on the second Tuesday of every month to discuss issues affecting local health services. Everyone welcome. 7.30 pm at the Shoreditch Health Centre, 210 Kingsland Road, E2.

THE MATTHEW O'HARA COMMITTEE

Thurs 5 Feb: Public meeting to discuss the conditions in prisons and mental homes, which allowed Matthew O'Hara to die. To be held each month at 8 pm in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, E8.

NEW ISLINGTON & HACKNEY TENANTS' ASSOCIATION (ACORN)

All tenants of New Islington & Hackney Housing Association are invited to a special meeting of your Tenants' Association, Acorn, on:

Tuesday 10 February, at 7.30 pm, at Essex Rd Library, Essex Road, N1 (near Essex Rd Station). The meeting is to discuss repairs and maintenance. Come and talk to your tenants' representative - your housing is under attack! For further information, telephone 739 3631.

GAY MEN'S SELF DEFENCE

Ten week course on self defence starts on **Sun 25 Jan** 7-9 pm, at the Factory, 107 Mathias Rd, N16. Gay instructor, fully qualified. Contact Tony Landsberg, at 36 Foulden Rd, N16, for details.

HACKNEY CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT SPEAKERS AND SLIDE SHOW

HCND have over ten speakers who are willing to visit any group or organisation in Hackney on the issue of nuclear disarmament. Subjects for discussion include: British Civil Defence; Soviet & American strategic thinking; Cruise Missiles; CND strategy in the '80s; Alternative Employment in the arms trade, etc.

The slide show contains over 50 slides on the H-bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 and the resulting damage to life.

Together with speakers and slides, HCND will provide a literature stall selling CND badges, leaflets and books, plus HCND's own publications. You tell us when you want a speaker to come along to your next meeting, what you'd like to discuss, and leave the rest to us.

WRITE NOW TO:

Speakers,
Hackney CND,
P.O. Box No. 27,
136 Kingsland High St,
LONDON E8.

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GALLERY BOOK STORE invites artists to submit work for **THE 1981 EXHIBITION** (Professional and student)

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Work can be submitted (gallery hours) up to 13 February.

Exhibition will run from 17 February - 7 March.

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HOXTON HALL THEATRE

128a HOXTON STREET, LONDON N1 (Tel: 739 5431)

NEW THEATRE SEASON OPENS ON 30th JANUARY

Programme of events

Friday 30 January	THE NONSUCH SINGERS
Saturday 31 January & Sunday 1 February	'GOING DOWN 'OXTON' - by the Experience Youth Theatre
Friday 6 & Saturday 7 February	'OUT OF OUR HEADS' - by Hoxton Young People's Theatre
Sunday 8 February	ACTIONSPACE BENEFIT with CABARET!
Friday 13 February	STUART DEEKS - Music for voice and violin
Saturday 14 February	ST. VALENTINE'S SOCIAL - with THE OAKLANDERS
Friday 20 February	GYMNASTIC DANCE THEATRE
Saturday 21 February	BARN DANCE
Tuesday 24 February	'THE OLD TESTAMENT' - by Incubus Theatre
Friday 27 February	MAJOR CHORLTON-CUM-HARDY'S MUSIC HALL

Telephone for details. All shows commence at 8.00 pm. Admission: £1; Children/Claimants 30p; Pensioners 20p.

Weekend Workshops (2-day courses: £3; unwaged £1)

14-15 Feb: Music; 21-22 Feb: Dance; 28-29 Mar: Mixed Media

Regular Classes in:

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Youth, Pensioners, Women, School & Pre-School children

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No Equality At Birth

Every birth it comes different



writings from Hackney Reading Centre

Every Birth It Comes Different - writings from Hackney Reading Centre; £1.20

This book is an anthology of writings by women who have experienced pregnancy and childbirth, by fathers and one by a friend. I don't know if similar collections have been published, but if they have I have never seen them in the now well-stocked women's health sections in local bookshops. For me, this was the first time I'd read or heard about first-hand experience of childbirth and miscarriage. Information that had up until now been buried in voluminous handbooks on the subject was told simply and directly - the beginning of labour, the pain and the moment of birth are all written about really vividly. But what comes over most of all is the intimacy of the writing and the lack of self-consciousness of each woman, which is characteristic of much of the work done by women and men at Hackney Reading Centre.

The fact that this is a collection, rather than a single autobiography also gives the book a special significance - you get the impression that the authors have come together to talk about, and share their memories of very important times in their lives.

I think this is a worthwhile book for anyone to

buy who is interested in childbirth. It draws you in, in a way that no handbook can. And as a book it's a nice one to own - it's got a good introduction, it tells you something about each of the writers, it's got a wonderful title and no one has written too densely. If this seems too praising, well, perhaps some of the photos do lend the air of technical illustration. But I'd like to find this book in local family planning centres and doctors' surgeries, as well as on display in libraries. (As a postscript, though, I hope someone who has had a child will give their point of view, too.)

Wolcott Offends

Wolcott burst onto our TV screens in the middle of January in four one-hour programmes shown, unusually, in the same week. It was supposed to be the fictional adventures of a black detective in the Metropolitan Police based in, believe it or not, Hackney. What we in fact saw was an amazing mish-mash of badly made films, showing lots of local places, a series of racial caricatures, gratuitous sex and violence.

The programmes seem to have offended everyone who saw them, including the police. The black population of Hackney was seen to be

almost entirely composed of drug-dealers, muggers and criminals, and other racist stereotypes. The police were either thick or crooked.

Dudley Dryden, chairperson of Hackney Council for Racial Equality told HPP that the HCRE would be taking the programmes up with ATV, the company that made them. He had thought originally that the programmes might show some integrity, but he had quickly seen that that was not the case.

HPP would like to hear from

readers what they thought of the programmes. Did they reflect life in Hackney as you know it?

A number of local individuals and groups have already written to ATV to protest at the films. If you were as appalled as they were, then write to them at this address:

Jean Morton, Head of Audience Relations, ATV Network Ltd, ATV Centre, Birmingham B1 2JP.



A photo by photographers at the Clapton Youth Centre of a martial arts demonstration by Professor Dossett and his team.

This picture was taken by Everton Gale, one of the photographers at the Clapton Youth Centre, where this demonstration of martial arts was staged by Professor Dossett and his team. "This picture is about when this boy is throwing a girl", writes Everton, "and the thing I like about this picture is it's taken in different stages. The hand is out of focus, it's so fast. It's actually moving when the picture's taken. All the hair flashing about. That shows how really fast it was."

The photographic session is on Thursday evening at 6 pm, and other activities at the Clapton Youth Centre, which is in Almack Rd, E5, include art, drama, dance, steel band and many sports.

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Weekly Programme

Mon 2 Feb for 2 wks. BABYLON (X) & PRESSURE (AA)
Mon 23 Feb for 7 days INCREDIBLE JOURNEY (U) & DEVIL AND MAX DEVLIN (A)

Sunday Matinees

February 1st (at 2.30) CASABLANCA & THE MALTESE FALCON
February 8th (at 2.30) BREAKING AWAY & NORMA RAE
February 15th (at 2.30) AMARCORD & GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS

Friday & Saturday Lates at 11.15 pm

Fri 6 February BABYLON & PRESSURE
Sat 7 February BREAKING AWAY & NORMA RAE
Fri 13 February AMARCORD & GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS
Sat 14 February BABYLON & PRESSURE

As the rest of the programme was not available as we went to press, we advise that you ring the Rio Cinema box office for times of weekly programmes and further details.

HPP BENEFIT

C: S # ARPS

THE FLATS

+ disco

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Chat's Palace

42-44 BROOKSBYS WALK E.9.

Answer is no answer

We reported last month that Stanley Clinton Davis MP had sent the Home Office 38 questions about Matthew O'Hara's treatment in Pentonville prison last year. Matthew, a diabetic, died from an illness that started during the four days he was in the prison. Before he died he told friends he was assaulted and had vital insulin refused.

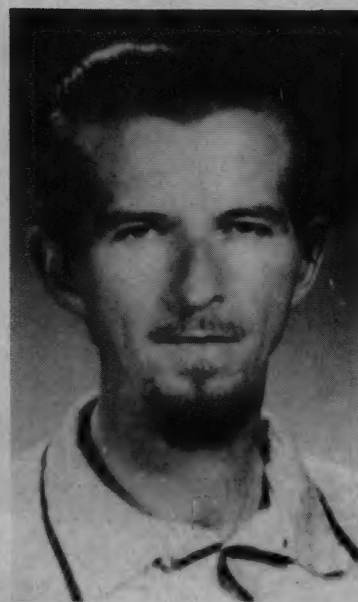
Clinton Davis has just received an answer that has angered him, and astounded Matthew's doctor, prison reform groups and friends of Matthew. Lord Belstead, the Minister responsible for prisons, is "not prepared to attempt to give detailed answers to the list of questions", and refuses to investigate the issues further. Clinton Davis describes Belstead's response

as "hopelessly unsatisfactory... He has studiously avoided answering the specific questions put to him". Within a week of receiving the reply the MP has arranged a meeting with Matthew's GP and the various friends and organisations represented on the Matthew O'Hara Committee to decide on the most effective response. Ernie Roberts and Ron Brown, Hackney's other MPs, have both promised support. As we go to press, we do not know if the case will go to the Ombudsman or will be raised in Parliament, but Lord Belstead has certainly not heard the last of Matthew O'Hara.

Clinton Davis sent the Home Office an official transcript of the inquest, a report from the Royal Northern Hospital (to which Matthew

was sent from the prison), a statement made by Matthew's GP, and details of whom Matthew told about his diabetes whilst in prison. All this evidence was new and appeared to show Lord Belstead's earlier replies were medically unintelligible, largely irrelevant and left all the important questions unanswered. Hence the detailed questions that Clinton Davis put to the Home Office. We have only space here to deal with one point from the substantial and impressive document he submitted.

Dr Smith (Matthew's GP) points out that even if everything the Home Office has said is true (there is good reason to believe it is not), the evidence shows Matthew was seriously ill in a cell without medical atten-



tion for 36 hours before being sent to hospital. Clinton Davis wanted to know when the various symptoms of Matthew's illness were first observed: vomiting, coughing blood, increasing weakness, confusion, lethargy and loss of rationality, stomach pain and almost complete loss of voice. Dr Smith has shown

it is a medical impossibility for some of these symptoms to have developed suddenly on the day Matthew was sent to the hospital, and the hospital's report said others (coughing blood and copious vomiting) apparently started 36 hours before they received him. For a day and a half it seems Matthew was left to suffer in a cell. It seems important to establish whether this neglect was by warders failing to report the development of the illness to the prison doctors, or the doctors failing to act on reports received. Clinton Davis therefore asked when the symptoms were first reported and what action the doctors took. If not reported until the day Matthew was sent to hospital, Lord Belstead was asked to find out why.

Belstead refuses to answer any of these questions. Some, he says, could only be answered by breaking medical confidentiality. This excuse is nonsense as Matthew's doctor helped to write the questions and if Pentonville Prison does not record when a prisoner starts coughing blood then no wonder so many prisoners die!

FIGHT-BACK FUND

As you will be aware, we have had to put the price of Hackney People's Press up to 12p. We hope readers will be willing to pay this little extra for the paper. It is, we should point out, the first time we have put up the price since November 1977 - beat that Marks & Spencer!

However, we should tell our readers that this price rise is a symptom of a nasty truth - that HPP is in desperate financial trouble. In fact, it is only because we have managed to extend our credit at the printers that this issue can actually get into your hands at all. We have a deficit of some £300, and we can see no easy way of wiping this out.

This is where you come in. We are going to launch the first ever appeal for general financial support for Hackney People's Press. Our most loyal readers will recall the £100 we raised for our little difficulty with Councillor

Miles Leggett (hi there, Miles!) some three years ago, when the paper was last threatened with closure. Well, two years of escalating costs under Thatcher and the Tories have made our problems that much worse. Despite taking a now considerable quantity of advertising and having a healthier circulation, we have to face the facts that we actually lose money on each issue. Like Lord Thomson, we have come to the end of the road. But unlike Lord Thomson we don't, thank God, have Rupert Murdoch about to rush to our rescue.

Immediately, our problem is to find the £300 to pay off our outstanding bills. In the longer term, we need money to expand the paper and put us on a firmer footing. For instance, an extra £300 would buy us a headliner, which would make life much easier for us as well as remove the £5 or more a month we spend on transfer lettering for headlines.

Our target, therefore, is



to raise £300 by 31 March, and if possible, a further £300 by 30 June. So far, without public announcement of the fund, we have had promises of £26. And there is to be a benefit gig at Chats Palace on Friday 20 February, with two bands, the C Sharps and the Flats.

Come along to the benefit and have a good time and support your local paper. More importantly, rush your donations for our Fighting Fund to us. Our future depends on your response.



INSIDE OUT...

In his ceaseless quest for supporters of the Council for Social Democracy amongst local Labour Party members, Inside Left has fled to the lush pastures and bright lights of a skiing holiday in Gstaad. He hopes to return next month...

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS holds regular meetings on Mondays at 8pm in our office at 85 Dalston Lane, E8. If you would like to find out more about us - or volunteer to help write, produce or sell the next issue - then please come along. Meetings in February are on 2nd, 9th and 16th. If you can't come, then ring 249 8191 (messages in day time) or 249 0311 (evenings & weekends).

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. All decisions are made collectively.

HPP is sold through various newsagents and shops throughout Hackney. If you think that your newsagent would like to sell it, on sale or return, then please contact us. And if you don't think that you can spare the time to become more fully involved, but you enjoy reading HPP and think more people should read it, then please get in touch if you are willing to sell a few copies to your friends or neighbours or at meetings.

RACE LAW MEETING

In 1971 the Tories brought in a racist immigration act. They now plan to follow this up by bringing in nationality proposals which would deprive thousands of Hackney citizens of their rights.

The Hackney North and Stoke Newington Labour Party is to call a meeting in March to explain these proposals and discuss how to fight them. The meeting will also call for support for the March 29 demonstration against the Tory Nationality Bill.

The Hackney North and Stoke Newington Labour Party wants to organise this meeting jointly with ethnic minority and anti-racist groups, so that there is the widest possible campaign in the borough on this issue.

If you belong to an organisation which might be interested in sponsoring the meeting, please ask its secretary to write to: Secretary, HN & SN Labour Party, 8a Beatty Road, N16. Mark envelope "Nationality Meeting".

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